

# 7 SENATORS JOIN IN CRITICIZING LETTER WRITTEN BY CIA DIRECTOR

Question Propriety  
Of Response To Edi-  
torial Concerning  
Senate Surveillance

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WASHINGTON, July 28—Seven Senators joined today in questioning the propriety of a letter written by Central Intelligence Agency Director Richard Helms to the St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

They criticized Helms sharply for writing in praise of an editorial in the Globe-Democrat describing Senator J. W. Fulbright (Dem.), Arkansas, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, as "crafty" and expressing satisfaction at the rejection of Fulbright's proposal to expand Senate surveillance of the CIA.

Senator Eugene J. McCarthy (Dem.), Minnesota, opened the colloquy on the Senate floor by reading the editorial and Helms's letter.

"I am not going to take issue with the editorial," he said. "I suppose it is within the limits of irresponsibility that must be allowed on editorial pages."

## Calls for Apologies

McCarthy called the letter "entirely out of order" and said that Helms owed an apology not only to Senator Fulbright but to every member of the Senate.

Majority leader Mike Mansfield (Dem.), Montana, said he was "more than a little surprised that the silent service has seen fit to write to the newspaper in question."

Mansfield said that the Senate's concern over the letter should be brought to the attention of Mr. Helms, so that this will not become a habit with him.

Three members of the special Senate committee assigned to supervise CIA activities joined in criticizing Helms for entering into the debate on pending Senate business. Fulbright's proposal to add members of the Foreign Relations Committee to the supervisory group was sidetracked by a referral of the resolution to the Armed Services Committee.

## Call By Saltonstall

Senator Leverett M. Saltonstall of Massachusetts, ranking Republican on the Armed Services Committee and a member of the supervisory group, left the Senate floor to telephone Helms. He reported afterward that Helms acknowledged writing the letter and said that he had not written to any other newspapers about other editorials on the issue.

Saltonstall said that he had heard not a single word about personalities in the Senate debate July 14 on the Fulbright proposal and regretted that personalities had now been injected into the matter.

Other members of the supervisory committee who criticized Helms were Senators Milton R. Young (Rep.), North Dakota, and John Stennis (Dem.), of

Mississippi.

Young called the letter "shocking" and said that "the CIA was not supposed to be engaged in publicity."

Stennis termed the letter "very unfortunate." He said he hoped that Helms had acted on the bad advice of someone else rather than on unfortunate judgment of his own.

## Moss 'Disturbed'

Senator Frank E. Moss (Dem.), Utah, said he was "disturbed to learn that the director of the CIA would write a letter indorsing offensive and inaccurate statements made in a newspaper editorial."

Moss said the CIA appeared to be concerning itself with domestic polity. He said that Helms had "committed grave offense" and "may have limited his usefulness as CIA director."

Fulbright observed that there was nothing unique about the editorial, but said he was surprised that a career man would have so little discretion.

"I wonder if this new director hasn't misconstrued the Senate's vote of confidence and believes that all restraints have been removed," Fulbright said.

Fulbright said the incident raised a question as to what part the CIA took in domestic affairs.

He said he would like to ask Helms about rumors that the CIA takes part in labor union elections in this country and uses the Fulbright Foreign Study Grant program as a cover.

Mansfield said that he hoped Helms would not be harmed by the incident, but would "learn something of benefits to himself and to the country."